



District 127 - Session Wrap Up

July 2, 2015

Dear Fellow Texan,

First of all, thank you for subscribing to my newsletter. This email is the best way to keep in touch with what's going on up at the Texas Capitol, across Texas, and in the best House District in Texas -- District 127; the place we call home.

While being up in Austin on a full-time basis for six months was hard work, I will miss all of my colleagues as we travel home to various corners of the state. I am grateful to have spent time with my friends and fellow legislators to make sure that we're creating a better Texas for you and your family. That being said, coming home to the district is something I've been looking forward to for several months. Now that summer's finally here, my wife, Janet, and I have been enjoying spending quality time with our kids, Brianna, Ryan, and Dylan.

This session, I was able to serve on the House Public Education, State Affairs, and Calendars committees. I was also provided the opportunity to chair my own subcommittee, under the Public Education committee. The subcommittee on Educator Quality was able to meet throughout session to focus on teacher quality and evaluation, and it was my honor to pass several bills out of the subcommittee that addressed key teacher quality issues. It was a massive work load, but it allowed me to have my hand in several different policy areas around the Legislature.

This newsletter contains a lot of information about what was covered by the Texas House of Representatives and the Texas Senate this session. There were several long nights, but the two chambers were able to accomplish so much. This session, we passed a conservative budget that stayed well under the growth of the state's population and provides benefits to the areas we need it most. We were also able to put an additional \$800 million dollars toward border security. We passed legislation with the purpose of protecting our children, helping our veterans, and cutting taxes for Texans. Now that the "pink dome" is noticeably quieter, legislators and staff are in a time of reflection to understand how these new laws are going to affect our individual districts. This newsletter will give you a thorough picture the laws that Governor Abbott signed and how they will affect you and your family.

If you have questions about specific policy areas, or need anything at all, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff. Our contact information can be found at the bottom of this email. We're always happy to help you.

I wish you a Happy Independence Day, and I hope to see you at the events happening around District 127 this weekend.

Sincerely,



Dan Huberty

So... How'd it Go?

Legislative Stats

House and Senate Bills

Filed	6,476
Sent to the Governor	1,323
Signed by the Governor	1,119
Vetoed by the Governor	41
Filed without the Governor's signature	163

House and Senate Joint Resolutions

Filed	200
Filed with the Secretary of State	7

House and Senate Concurrent Resolutions

Filed	174
Filed with the Secretary of State	15
Sent to the Governor	85
Signed by the Governor	85
Vetoed by the Governor	1

Huberty Stats

House Bills

Authored	36
Signed by the Governor	6
Vetoed by the Governor	0
Joint Authored	19
Signed by Governor	3
Vetoed by Governor	0

House Resolutions

Authored and Joint Authored	32
Enrolled	32

Senate Bills

Sponsored (Including Joint)	11
Signed by the Governor	5
Vetoed by the Governor	0

Total Bills Passed	14
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Policy Focus

While there were several policy areas that Rep. Huberty focused on this session, the major policy areas that originated out of his office were prekindergarten and annexation. While Rep. Huberty had his hand in several policy areas that came through the various committees on which he serves, these two bills had the potential for the biggest impact for Texas. These major bills were great for our district, as well as our entire state. You can read briefly about Rep. Huberty's Policy Focus below:

Prekindergarten (House Bill 4)

In Texas currently, there are various public, state-funded prekindergarten programs; however, it has come to the attention of the legislature that there is no real quality control for these programs. The state has seen no real improvement in these programs over the years, and it was accordingly named one of Governor Greg Abbott's emergency items in his State of the State address. Rep. Huberty worked closely with Governor Abbott to ensure that the Legislature reached a compromise that provides disadvantaged families with the opportunity to begin education early in the public education system.

H.B. 4 establishes a high-quality prekindergarten program for public schools in Texas that must meet certain requirements, including data transparency, teacher certification, curriculum standards, and parent engagement. The bill directs the Commissioner of the Texas Education Agency to establish, by rule, a grant funding program under which funds are awarded to school districts and open-enrollment charter schools which meet the quality standards established by the bill. In order to qualify as a high-quality prekindergarten the district's program must include the prekindergarten guidelines established by the agency, measure the progress of students in meeting the recommended learning outcomes, and not use national curriculum standards adopted by the Common Core State Standards Initiative. This is purely an opt-in program, which establishes the framework for prekindergarten in Texas.



Governor Abbott and Representative Huberty and staff celebrating the signing of House Bill 4.

Annexation



Representative Huberty and Senator Phil Gramm on the Texas House of Representatives Floor.

In Representative Huberty's home district, the residents of Kingwood did not get a say or a vote when they were forcefully annexed and brought into Houston in the 1990s. Forced annexation, be it traditional annexation or limited-purpose annexation, gives complete authority to a city and no authority to unincorporated residents. Cities end up treating forced annexation as a way to extract revenue from unwilling residents, who chose to live outside the city in the first place.

House Bill 2221 attempted to prevent the unauthorized annexation of an area without the consent of property owners. This bill would not have prevented cities from being able to annex. Instead, it would have ensured that property rights were protected by allowing proposed annexation areas to have a say in their own future. Under

the plan laid out in the bill, a majority of the property owners must vote to allow annexation in order for a city to annex that area. If a majority of property owners do not vote in favor of annexation, then the city may not annex the area for at least one year. However, if the residents of a proposed annexation area give consent to be annexed, the annexation moves forward more quickly than it currently does. This reduces overhead while giving annexation-area residents the chance to participate. Texas has fallen behind other states with regards to annexation reform. According to Huberty, and after many years of talking about such reform, it was finally time to act to ensure that unincorporated property owners' rights are protected and that they have a voice in the process.

On May 14, 2015, the last day for the House of Representatives to consider new bills, H.B. 2221 came up for debate. Rep. Huberty had the support of several members, as well as support of former U.S. Senator Phil Gramm. There were several legislators of several big cities that wished to continue annexing unincorporated areas without the consent of the people living in those areas, but Rep. Huberty fought diligently to protect other Texans from experiencing what Kingwood experienced in the 1990s. Ultimately, the bill was killed by a point of order, but Rep. Huberty and his staff are already working to bring up the issue again next session.

(Please keep in mind that these bills are not the only bills that Rep. Huberty championed. There will be more in detail about the other bills he filed in upcoming newsletters.)

Top 10 Talking Points from the 84th Legislative Session

1) Public Education



Kingwood High School via [Kingwood Alumni](#).

This session, there were several meaningful measures addressed in the public education committee. From early education, to graduation requirements, the committee was able to pass significant reform to provide a quality education to our students. Additionally, important strides were made in the areas of School Finance and Standardized testing.

School Finance

The Chairman of the House Public Education Committee, Jimmie Don Aycock (R-Killeen), filed **H.B. 1759** in order to circumvent the anxiously-anticipated Supreme Court decision on school finance.

School districts in Texas allege that the Legislature inadequately and unequally distributes funds to various districts across the state, following the \$5 billion cuts during the 82nd Legislative Session. A Travis County district judge ruled in the districts' favor, and the state appealed the lawsuit to the Texas Supreme Court, which is expected to be heard later this year.

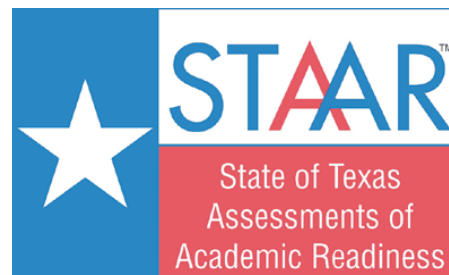
The bill, which died on the House Floor after Aycock decided to pull it down, was intended to be a conversation starter. The plan would reduce the number of districts that are required to send money back to the state under the "recapture" program. The bill would also remove the "Cost of Education Index" which gives districts extra money based on characteristics that vary from district to district.

Although the bill was pulled down by the author, it created a very healthy discussion about our current system of school finance, and the need for overhaul, regardless of the Texas Supreme Court's decision. The decision is expected late next year.

Standardized Testing

Additionally, the Legislature focused on reducing further the amount of standardized tests required by each school. During the 83rd Legislative Session, the legislature focused on reducing end of course exams and standardized testing for high school students, and this session, they focused on elementary through middle school students.

Representative Huberty filed **H.B. 743** which require that assessment instruments be designed so that 85 percent of the students in grades 3 through 5 complete the assessment in 120 minutes and 85 percent of the students in grades 6 through 8 complete the assessment in 180 minutes. This bill was well supported by both the House and the Senate, and will drastically reduce the amount of pressure on the students during the testing that are required to undergo.



STAAR Logo via [Dallas ISD](#).

H.B. 1164 further reduced STAAR testing by getting rid of the two writing assessments for students in grades 4 and 7.

Finally, **S.B. 149** by Senator Kel Seliger, sponsored by Rep. Huberty on the House side, creates alternative methods to satisfy high school graduation requirements. This bill applies to current 11th and 12th grade students (the first two cohorts that were administered the STAAR test) and is designed to prevent a dropout crisis, and to evaluate the whole student, rather than the student's Standardized Test or End of Course Exam scores. Members of the graduation committee will evaluate the student's progress and academic achievements beyond the scope of the STAAR test and make a determination if the individual should be afforded grade promotion or to graduate. In addition, the bill requires that assessment instruments be determined to be valid and reliable based on empirical evidence by an entity independent of the TEA and test developer before being administered. This bill was an essential step in correcting the over-testing of our students. During testimony, there were several accounts of students with stellar SAT/ACT scores, and even scholarships to universities that weren't able to graduate due to the test-fatigue of years past.

2) Tax Relief

Along with a balanced budget, the Texas Legislature was able to pass several pieces of legislation that will provide significant tax relief for businesses and all Texans. **S.B. 1** increases the homestead exemption for school property tax from \$15,000 to \$25,000 beginning with the 2016 tax year, effectively returning \$1.24 billion to Texas taxpayers. The bill also prohibits a school district, municipality or county from repealing an optional homestead exemption before the 2020 tax year. S.B. 1 will take effect only if voters approve the constitutional amendment proposed by **S.J.R. 1** on November 3, 2015.

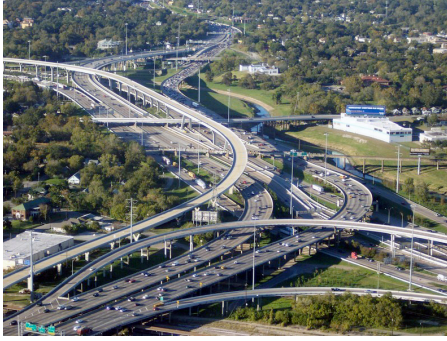
In addition, **S.B. 1760**, which passed with overwhelming support in both chambers, will make a number of important changes to the Property Tax Code to increase transparency and promote efficiency in the property tax system. S.B. 1760 requires an affirmative vote of at least 60 percent of the governing body of a local taxing unit that wishes to exceed the effective tax and requires local taxing units to justify the necessity of a tax increase on notices and election ballots. The bill also requires the Comptroller to publish an annual ranking of local tax rates in Texas, from the highest rate to the lowest. Property tax relief was one of the biggest issues that the legislature wanted to address in the 84th legislative session. The passage of both of these bills was a huge victory for all conservative Texans.

3) Higher Education

It was a great session for Higher Education funding! The State Budget increases funding by 7.5 percent, providing an additional \$1.5 billion from the current two-year funding period. \$40 million was also put into the Governor's University Research Initiative, a new fund created to attract top researchers to public Texas universities. Additionally, **H.B. 100** authorizes \$3.1 billion in capital construction bonds for public institutions of higher education.

High School students were also afforded the opportunity to take as many dual credit courses that they wish to take. **H.B. 505** repeals an Education Code provision prohibiting a high school student from enrolling in more than three dual credit courses at a junior college if the junior college does not have a service area that includes the student's high school. The bill also amends the Education Code to prohibit certain limitations on the number of dual credit courses or hours in which a high school student may enroll as part of a college credit program. This bill will allow students to get ahead in their college careers while still in high school.

4) Transportation



I-10, 1-45 interchange via [Wikipedia](#).

Each Session, Transportation is always a heated topic of debate, but this session there were select measures passed by the Texas Legislature to move toward better funding, better *use* of funds, and meaningful changes for our communities.

Senate Joint Resolution 5 proposes a constitutional amendment to take effect in 2018 that will dedicate a portion of general sales tax revenue to the State Highway Fund. This would dedicate up to \$2.5 billion annually to the state highway fund. This joint resolution provides a stable revenue source to address the state's transportation needs without raising taxes or fees. It is important to note that these funds are not to be used for toll roads.

Additionally, **H.B. 20** provides necessary oversight, transparency, and accountability to ensure that the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) maximizes the effectiveness of the resources we have provided. Under this measure TxDOT is required to develop a performance-based planning and programming process that will allow the legislature to assess how well they are achieving their goals. It also requires the Transportation Commission to establish a scoring system to prioritize projects seeking state funding. Finally, temporary House and Senate select committees in order to provide oversight as the provisions of the bill are implemented.

5) Border Security

Border Security was declared an Emergency Item by Governor Greg Abbott in his State of the State address. Because of this, the Legislature passed multiple bills to ensure that our Texas borders are secure to prevent illegal immigration, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and other illegal activities. The following bills have been signed into law by Governor Abbott, and will go into effect September 1 of this year.

- **House Bill 11:** Allows for the hiring of 250 new DPS troopers; establishes a transnational intelligence center on the border to analyze crime data and to serve as a real-time, around-the-clock intelligence hub for state and local law enforcement agencies; creates a new offense for smuggling if a person knowingly transports or harbors someone in the country illegally for profit; requires DPS to form a plan to establish southbound checkpoints on international bridges to search for weapons, contraband, and bulk cash.
- **Senate Bill 374:** Requires state agencies and public universities to use the E-Verify system to protect against the hiring of those who are in the country illegally.
- **House Bill 12:** Establishes a Border Prosecution Unit, which will facilitate cooperation among prosecutors, provide investigative assistance, and develop best practices for the investigation of border crimes.

6) Veterans Affairs

This session, there were several measures introduced to make lives easier for the Americans that have given the most for our country: our Veterans. **H.B. 437**, filed by Rep. Raney (R-Bryan), would allow



Gov. Rick Perry signing the "Chris Kyle Bill" in
2013 via [U.S. Air National Guard by Staff Sgt.
Phil Fountain](#).

people coming back to jobs at state agencies following military service to receive benefits without the current waiting period. This bill is an important step in reminding our Texas veterans that they are supported back home, and that we are doing everything we can to facilitate their transition back to their everyday lives.

Additionally, **H.B. 19**, focuses on the mental health of our veterans. The bill strengthens the network of preventative services and mental health resources available to military members, veterans, and their families. We've seen an increase of the focus on mental health of our veterans over the past few years, and this

session, Governor Abbott named February 2 to be named "Chris Kyle Day," in honor of Chris Kyle, a Texan who inspired the movie *American Sniper*, who fell victim to a fellow veteran suffering from mental anguish.

In order to support communities affected by large amounts of military service, **Senate Bill 503** authorizes the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office to provide loans for economic development projects to communities affected by base reduction or base realignment. This is an important step in ensuring that communities remain supported, when its members are serving overseas and risking their lives for Americans back home.

7) States' Rights

There were several concurrent resolutions filed in both the House and the Senate in order to protect our state from over-invasion from the federal government. **H.C.R. 67** and **S.C.R. 1**, filed by Rep. Huberty and Senator Brandon Creighton would allow the state to protect its own sovereignty under the 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

While neither of these resolutions were able to make it to the Governor's desk, they were important steps in reaffirming the necessity for states' rights to be protected in the United States. We have seen several instances of federal overreach in the last few years, including the Affordable Care Act, the Real I.D. Act, EPA's Environmental Protection Plan, federal blocking of the Keystone XL pipeline, and the Bureau of Land Management's claims to new land. Stopping federal overreach is an essential step in ensuring that the specific needs of Texans are met in ways that will truly affect change.



The Gonzales Flag, a replica
via [Gallery of the Republic](#).

8) Open Carry and Second Amendment Rights



Advocacy group, Open Carry Texas, at the Capitol.
Photo: Tom Wiseman, Texas Tribune via [KERA](#)

News

premises.

Second Amendment rights were a huge focus of this session. The two major foci of this issue settled on the open carrying of handguns and the concealed carrying of handguns on college campuses. **H.B. 910** allows for the licensed, open carrying of hand guns. Texans wishing to open carry are required to obtain a concealed weapons permit, which requires individuals to pass a background check and demonstrate handgun proficiency. Private businesses' rights are still protected in that they can prevent or restrict the open carrying of handguns on their

Additionally, **S.B. 11** authorizes the concealed carrying of handguns on public college campuses. The universities are permitted to establish rules, regulations, or other provisions concerning the storage of handguns in forms and other residential facilities owned or operated by the university. Students that wish to concealed carry are still required to obtain a permit from the State of Texas.

9) Pro-Life

Several bills were passed this session to ensure the funding of alternatives to abortion, and the defunding of Planned Parenthood and other organizations providing abortions to women in the state. **House Bill 3994**, effective January 1, 2016, limits the ability for minors to surpass parental consent to receive an abortion. This measure is an extremely important step in ensuring that Texan minors are protected, while simultaneously protecting parental rights of those minors.

H.B. 3374, effective September 1, 2015, will ensure that parents are given as much information as possible on how to raise a child with Down Syndrome if the prenatal tests indicate that the unborn child is at high risk for Down Syndrome. This bill is a victory both for the champions of Pro-Life and Special Needs policies by ensuring that our most at-risk population is able to live happy, healthy lives. This bill passed both the Texas House and Senate unanimously.

Finally, **H.B. 3074**, effective September 1, 2015, clarifies the current Texas Advanced Directives Act to improve patient care by providing the basic human rights, of food and water, to patients that cannot speak for themselves. This would prevent incidents of patients being robbed of food and water with no medical standard for their withdrawal. This bill also passed unanimously through both chambers.

10) Pastor Protection



Gov. Greg Abbott signs S.B. 2065 into law .
Photo: Marjorie Kamys Cotera via [The Texas Tribune](#)

This session, the Texas Legislature passed a statutory measure to protect pastors from performing marriage ceremonies or participate in celebrations of marriage that contradict their personal, sincerely-held religious beliefs. **Senate Bill 2065**, effective immediately, also protects clergy and houses of worship from lawsuits or criminal prosecution if they refuse to marry any couple, based upon their religious beliefs. This legislation was in response to several pastors in Houston that were subpoenaed and were required to overturn their religious sermons, texts, and materials to city governments. This is a great victory for religious freedom in Texas.

During the state affairs hearing on April 22, 2015, testimony was heard on **H.B. 3567**, the identical bill to S.B. 2065. During this testimony, the committee heard from pastors and clergy all across the state expressing their need for protection from judicial proceedings that contradict their religious freedoms. The passage of S.B. 2065 will guarantee the protection of clergy across the state and will continue to ensure that religious institutions are protected by the law to express their religious beliefs.

House Bill 1:

The Budget and What It Means for You

The Basics

The 2016-2017 Texas State Budget amounts to \$209.4 billion. This represents a growth of 3.6% from the 2014-2015 biennium. H.B. 1 stays well beneath the constitutional spending caps, and keeps the budget below what would be necessary to amount for population and inflation increases.

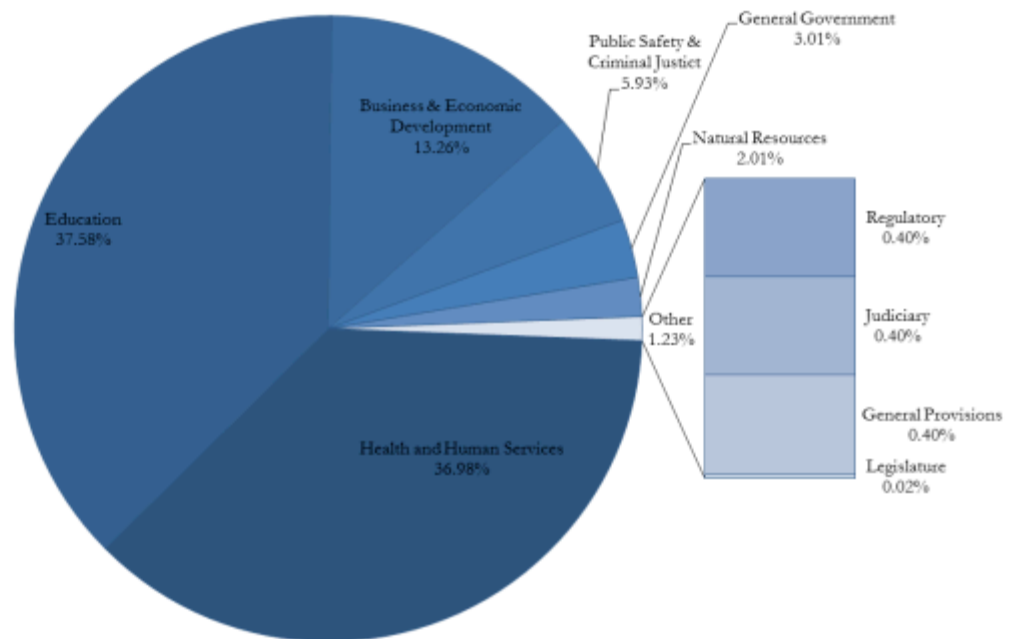
Additionally, \$11 billion was left in the state's Rainy Day Fund, to ensure that Texas remains financially stable in the event of unforeseen occurrences. The bill also appropriates several billion dollars to specific policy areas which are outlined in the Breakdown below.

The Breakdown

- **Public Education:** Fully funds our classroom enrollment growth and adds an additional \$1.5 billion to public education funding.
- **Transportation:** Uses all of the money in the State Highway Fund for transportation instead of using some of those dollars for other programs, effectively increasing transportation funding by more than \$1 billion for each biennium.
- **Border Security:** Provides \$840 million for border security and allows for hiring of 250 new Department of Public Safety troopers.
- **Protecting Children:** Funding for Child Protective Services increased by \$332 million to address serious challenges in protecting abused children.
- **Behavioral Health:** Funding for behavioral health and substance abuse is increased by \$244 million.
- **All-Funds Budget:**
 - Public Education All Funds (General Revenue Funds + General Revenue Dedicated + Federal Funds + Other Funds) appropriations total \$54.5 billion for the 2016–17 biennium, an All Funds increase of \$2.9 billion, or 5.6 percent from the 2014–15 biennium.
 - The All Funds increase is primarily attributable to \$1.5 billion in Foundation School Program (FSP) funding in excess of amounts estimated to be necessary to fund current law obligations and an additional \$1.2 billion for the FSP contingent on property tax relief providing an equivalent reduction in local property taxes.
- **General Revenue Funding:**
 - General Revenue Fund appropriations for the FSP total \$35.5 billion, a \$3.8 billion, or 12.3 percent, increase from the 2014–15 biennium.
 - The General Revenue Fund amount reflects an increase of \$2.6 billion to replace lower estimated Property Tax Relief Fund revenue (Other Funds) due to franchise tax relief, \$1.2 billion in property tax relief, and \$1.5 billion in additional funding for schools, partially offset by a lower state cost to fund current law compared to the 2014–15 biennium.

2016-17 State Budget - Total Spending \$209.4 Billion

Spending By Major Area of State Government



Constituents at the Capitol

This Session, there were several constituents and groups of constituents that came to the Capitol to visit Rep. Huberty and his staff. Rep. Huberty and his team all agree that having a bit of home come to the work place is the fuel they all need to get through the long nights and heated debates. Here are a few pictures of some of the visits this session.

Thank you to all who came up to visit.



Representative Huberty with members of [Kingwood Area Republican Women - KARW](#) at the [Texas State Capitol](#) for Governor Greg Abbott's Inauguration on January 20, 2015.



Rep. Huberty visiting with the [Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce](#) members on February 17, 2015.



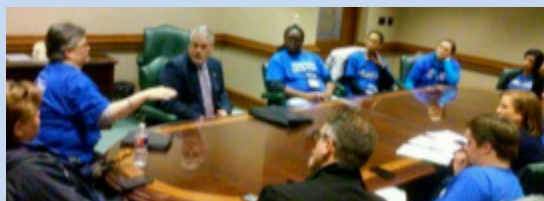
The Leadership North Houston program with Sen. Bettencourt, Rep. Huberty, and Lieutenant Governor [Dan Patrick](#) on February 19, 2015.



Members of the Humble ISD ATPE in Rep. Huberty's office, down in the Capitol Extension on February 23, 2015.



The Humble ISD Council of PTAs and Rep. Huberty on February 25, 2015. The council discussed #BackTheFuture with legislators and staff across the Capitol.



Several members of Texas American Federation of Teachers (AFT) from Humble Independent School District meeting with Rep. Huberty at the Capitol on March 9, 2015.



The Atascocita High School Orchestra and Choir performed in the Rotunda at the Texas Capitol on March 19, 2015. The performance was for tourists, legislators, and staff.



Huffman ISD Trustee Matt Dutton and his kids, Matthew and Hannah, visited the Texas Capitol on March 19, 2015. The Dutton family came by the office to say hello to the Representative and his staff.



March 23, 2015, The [Texas House of Representatives](#) remembered the life of Dr. Jane Nelson with House Resolution 539. Dr. Nelson's family are seen here on the House Floor with Rep. Huberty.



Rep. Huberty and Senator [Brandon Creighton](#) with members of the Kingwood Area Republican Women (KARW) on Texas Federation of Republican Women (TFRW) Day at the Texas Capitol, on April 16, 2015.



Rep. Huberty with the family of Barbara Jordan at the [Texas House of Representatives](#) to celebrate her life with HR 1174, on April 16, 2015.



Woodland Hills Elementary Fourth Graders with Rep. Huberty while they toured the Texas Legislature at the Capitol on May 19, 2015.



Miss Morgan Ellis served as an Honorary Page in the [Texas House of Representatives](#) with Rep. Huberty on May 21, 2015. She was able to help facilitate debate between the representatives, meet the Speaker of the House Joe Straus, and help the House Sergeants with their duties while the House was in session.

Family Focus

The Huberty family is so glad that summer is finally here and to have Rep. Huberty back in District 127 on a full-time basis. Now that school's out and that the 84th Legislative Session has wrapped up, the Huberty family wasted no time in spending the quality time together that they missed these past six months.

Happy Father's Day *and* Birthday, Dan

Legislative Day at Schlitterbahn



L-R: Brianna, Ryan, Rep. Huberty, and Dylan

ABOVE: Representative Huberty and his children on June 21, Rep. Huberty's birthday and Father's Day. It was a day of celebration for the Huberty family. Pictured are Rep. Huberty and his three children.

RIGHT: Texas Legislators and Staff were invited to Schlitterbahn, in New Braunfels, TX, by Rep. Huberty's colleague Rep. Doug Miller. The Huberty family was able to get some fun in the sun, and spend time with other Legislators and their families.



Rep. Huberty and Janet Huberty



Ryan and Dylan Huberty at Schlitterbahn

Brianna's Trip to California

Brianna had to unfortunately miss the Schlitterbahn trip with the family, but she was able to go with one of her best friends, Nadia, to California! Here she is at Universal Studios and the Hollywood sign!



Upcoming Independence Day Events

Raffas Fourth of July Celebration

Join in on a night of patriotic festivities with Raffas Waterfront Grill in Kings Harbor. On Friday, July 3, there will be live music provided with Elvis tribute artist, Vince King, starting at 6:30 p.m. and a fireworks display will begin at 9:30 p.m. off of the pier. Outdoor patio seating is available and reservations are recommended. For more information or to make a reservation call 281-360-1436.

Fishing Rodeo

The fishing rodeo is from 6–7:30 a.m. July 4 at the corner of Kingwood Drive and Forest Garden at Foster's Mill Pond. Children 15 and younger are invited to bring fishing gear and poles. Trophies will be awarded. No registration is required.

Kingwood Parade

Lineup for the parade begins at the corner of Feather Lakes and West Lake Houston Parkway at 7 a.m. Saturday, July 4. Float judging will begin at 9 a.m. The parade will kick off at 10 from Creekwood Middle School on Sandy Forks. The parade will end when all of the participants reach Kingwood High School. For more information, contact Cindy Higgins at 281-793-4146 or Tom Rushin at 713-715-9319 or email kingwoodcivicclub@yahoo.com.

Forest Cove Fourth of July Parade

Lineup for the parade will be at 9 a.m. and the parade will start at 10 a.m. July 4 in front of the Forest Cove Community Center. Adult tickets will cost \$10 and \$5 for kids under 10. Along with the parade, there will be outdoor games for kids, live music and raffle prizes. Barbecue and desserts will be served at 12 p.m. For more information, contact Marian Burrows at 281-358-3033.

Flag Retirement Ceremony

Boy Scout Troop 839 from the First Presbyterian Church of Kingwood will be performing a U.S. and Texas flag retirement ceremony July 4. The ceremony will take place at the Town Center flag pole at 4:30 p.m. Drop off all old Texas and U.S. flags at the Alspaugh's Ace Hardware stores in Kingwood or The Woodlands, or at any Rosewood Funeral Home. After the ceremony, the flags will be taken to Rosewood Funeral Homes to be incinerated in the crematorium.

Alspaugh's Street Dance

Kingwood Family Street Dance at Alspaugh's Ace Hardware, 2720 West Lake Houston Parkway, is returning again this year. The food service will begin at 6 p.m. Coolers and lawn chairs are welcome.

Kingwood Town Center Festival and Fireworks

Saturday, July 4, from 2–9 p.m., a festival and fireworks display will be held outdoors in the park. There will be live music including performances by That 70's Thing, and Thunder featuring Denny Hair on drums. There will also be arts and crafts, food and beverages, and bounce castles for the kids. The event will end with a fireworks display. For more information, contact Mike Ibanez at 713-419-4574 or by email at mike@towncenterevents.com. Streets around the park will be closed, so attendees should plan to park accordingly.

We Hope to See You There!

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